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ABSTRACT

Modern education in Japan from 1868 to 1945 stressed "national education" in order to promote a sense of belonging to the Japanese state. The Japanese culture was thought to be superior to that of its "less advanced" East Asian neighbors, and Japanese people were encouraged to adopt a "Yamato" identity (the seat of an ancient Japanese kingdom). Foreign nationals, most of whom lived in Japan as a result of Japanese colonization, were subjected to prejudice and discrimination. After World War II, imperial Japan's national education was subjected to extensive criticism, although this criticism did not extend to the education of non-Japanese in the country. Over time, however, local governments and community leaders began initiatives to improve the situation of ethnic minorities. In 1986, Kawasaki, the third largest city in Metropolitan Tokyo, established guidelines for educating foreigners and began to support community movements for minority education. The city set up a number of "Houses for Mutual Understanding" for Korean residents that were designed to help them understand and assimilate into Japanese culture while preserving their heritage and developing friendships with people of different cultures. Since then, a number of programs of adult education have developed in Japan, emphasizing both Japanese culture and the need for a multiethnic society for the future. At present, Kawasaki is seeking a nationwide adult education network for multiethnic communities covering approximately 3,300 local governments. A 1995 conference on social education was attended by nearly 1,000 grassroots activists and university teachers. An obstacle to a multiethnic society is national pride both in the Japanese and other East Asian cultures. A contributing factor to this obstacle is the influence of Confucianism, which demands blind loyalty to the state. Some leaders are promoting an alternate philosophy of "Laoze-Changze" that promotes oneness of people with nature and deemphasizes competition among states. (KC)

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Adult Education for a Multiethnic Community: Japan's Challenge

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1. The Illusion of a Monoethnic Nation and National Education as Instrument for Assimilation

Characteristic to Japan's modern education from 1868 to 1945 was "National Education." One of the purposes of this education was the promotion of a sense of belonging to the Japanese state.

Up until this period, however, no government had pursued such a purpose. Education had been conducted meeting demands from diverse communities, social classes and occupations, with no emphasis on cultural commonalities across such categories. The notorious idea concerning the supremacy of Japanese culture, with which Japan later justified her colonial domination of other East Asian nations, was not yet circulated. People believed Japanese culture--inclusive of Japan's religion, music, drama, dancing, novels, poetry, dressing, housing, and the manners of eating and sitting--was a variety of Asian culture. And in fact most people understood China, not Japan, to be the cultural centre of the world. In their perception, even Korea was more advanced than Japan culturally.

The dissolution of the Great Ching Empire in the wake of the Opium War and the subsequent concession of Hong Kong to Great Britain in 1842, and in the Franco-British occupation of Beijing in 1860, stirred up anxiety among political leaders about Japan's unclear future. In order to avoid Euro-American colonization thus the young Meiji government hastened the modernization of Japanese society and the construction of a nation state. For this, it fabricated an illusion that the Japanese state consisted of one single nation, the *Yamato*--a name which originally denoted the seat of an ancient Japanese kingdom. The government propagated the new idea that all residents of Japan belonged to the Yamato "nation." And it urged all of them to identify themselves as "Japanese" rather than as farmers, fishermen, craftsmen or merchants of some local village as they used to pose to be traditionally.

Negotiations with such neighbouring powers as Russia and China added to the new Yamato nation the Hokkaido Ainu and the subjects of the former Ryuku Kingdom. Both groups were coerced to adopt Japanese language, lifestyle and culture. The system of national education, which the Meiji government began to develop, was an effective vehicle for assimilating those peoples by such means as school textbooks. Such books stressed the cultural excellence of the Yamato nation.

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Since the 1880s, Japan employed aggressive policies as to her East Asian neighbours. She joined such Western nations as France and Great Britain in the invasion of China to annex Taiwan in 1895 and Korea in 1910. Japan embraced the ambition to expand her "Empire" to the whole of East Asia. Here again, national education was employed as an important means for consolidating newly-acquired colonies, of down-rating cultural relationships between Japanese and other East Asian peoples, and often of distorting historical facts. Thorugh national education Japan sought to stress her superiority. As part of this effort, the Japanese ideologues reformulated the cultural map of the world. The new map portrayed the West as the most culturally advanced region and Japan as the second most advanced region. China and Korea were treated as less advanced regions. Undoubtedly, this map played a great deal of role in equating Japan's colonizing and assimilating efforts with her benevolence for modernizing the 'less-advanced' neighbours.

Sufferings from colonization and assimilation were not confined to the neighbours. The Japanese people were no exception. They were indoctrinated to be ideal soldiers armed with the "Yamato soul" or as obedient ladies. It was a very common phenomenon that school teachers applied to students corporal punishment in the name of the Emperor. Anyone who made expressions disapproving of government policies was accused as a ***hikokumin*** or "non-member of the nation." Any woman disobedient to man would be reproached as a non-Yamato *nadeshiko* or "non-Japanese lady."

This by no means suggests that the colonized and assimilated peoples suffered less. They were forced to abandon their own culture and become Yamato, yet still discriminated against as non-Yamato even when they embraced assimilation on their own initiative. These facts are important to note in order for the Japanese people to assume responsibility for what they did to other East Asians and to solve some serious problems of today's Japanese society.

Assimilation policies used to be justified for the reason of a culture's superiority over other cultures and for the "necessity" of consolidating a nation-state. In Japan's case, the main ideology in the drive for cultural expansion and construction of a nation state was the modern Yamato-centred way of thinking. This way of thinking still remains a big obstacle in the development of a multiethnic community in Japan.

After the World War II, the imperial Japan's national education was brought to extensive criticism as Japan headed for democracy. Assimilation policies as to the colonized peoples, however, did not receive sufficient criticism. As a result, post-war governments did not render sufficient support to the education of non-Japanese residents in spite of the demands from the latter for the preservation and development of their own cultural identity. To make bad things worse, the governments used to ban or discourage such groups as Koreans from developing their own system of "national" education.

Luckily, civilians organized activities since the late 1940s to support the "democratic national education" of Korean residents. They did so, at the time of American occupation, as part of their effort to develop a "democratic national education for Japan's independence from the

United States." Although they were unprecedentedly vocal, they on their own part lacked a clear vision as to what could be possible beyond constructing a "democratic" system of national education. The best they had in view was the linkage and solidarity among "democratic national educations." Consequently, they could not offer any substantial help in the improvement of the situation of minority students in public schools and adult education programmes. Like government officials, they too regarded such schools and programmes as instruments for national education for the Japanese.

Meanwhile, discrimination was widely practised outside the school. Residents without Japanese nationality were not admitted into the officialdom of central and local governments, not to mention running or voting at elections. Although they paid taxes equally as Japanese nationals, they remained deprived of civil and some human rights.

2. The Challenges by Local Governments: The Kawasaki Case

Local governments and community leaders took initiative to improve the situation of ethnic minorities. In 1986, Kawasaki, the third largest city in Metropolitan Tokyo which sits right next to Metropolitan Tokyo, established guidelines for educating foreigners and began to support community movements for minority education. In fact, the focus of the guidelines was the improvement of Korean students' situation in public schools. They stressed the necessity to eradicate discrimination against Koreans and to give them opportunities to learn about their own language, culture and history. The guidelines also emphasized the necessity for majority students to learn about the historical relationships between Japan and Korea, especially about Japan's responsibility for the consequences of colonization, as a way to building mutual understanding and cooperation.

Under the guidelines Kawasaki set up a number of *Fureaikan*, or Houses for Mutual Understanding. The *Fureaikan* are managed by organizations of Korean residents but financed by the city government. Their programmes include courses covering Japanese language for foreigners, Korean language, Korean culture and history, human rights of foreigners, and other issues. Not only Korean residents but also Japanese nationals and such newcomers as Philippinos/as and Brazilians, take those courses. They enjoy study, acquire information about the region's daily life, and develop friendship with individuals of different ethnic backgrounds.

Since the 1980s the number of migrant foreign workers, such as Phillipinos/as, Chinese and Brazilian-Japanese, increased in line with the multinationalization of Japanese enterprises. In 1993, the number of non-national residents reached 1.6 million, doubling the record of 1983. In Japan now roughly one out of eighty residents is not a Japanese national. In Kawasaki, the figure is higher--one out of thirty and, in some areas, one out of ten.

Although Kawasaki's guidelines were originally prepared for Korean students, the increasing population of other minority groups made it inevitable to develop adult education

programmes towards a greater vision of forming "a multiethnic community." During the last five years, consequently, the number of city-run Japanese conversation and literacy classes for immigrants and migrant workers increased from two to twelve. Such classes are offered without tuition fees.

Besides Japanese language classes, there are classes to supply information about daily life in local community, such as social facilities, housing, education programmes, employment opportunities, and human rights protection agencies. Through such classes, as well, immigrants and migrant workers share experience in Japanese customs as well as cultural conflicts. They also find opportunities to converse in their own language and socialize with their own people. Finally, they make friends with the Japanese who come to help. The programmes have turned out to be effective in their settlement in a new cultural environment.

In order to get local residents involved in those programmes, the city-supported community learning centres in individual districts organized a "training seminar" for volunteer Japanese language teachers. The seminar discusses teaching methods not only in terms of how to teach the Japanese language but also in terms of how to understand the cultural backgrounds and needs of minority learners. The syllabus of the seminar includes the "History and Difficulties of Foreign Peoples in Japan," "Human Rights of Foreign Residents," "Japanese Culture and Language as East Asian Culture and Language," "Strategies for a Multiethnic Community in Japan and Kawasaki," and "Multicultural Education in Canada." The seminar is so popular among Japanese nationals that usually applicants number two or three times more than what seminar organizers can accommodate.

The volunteer teachers are mostly housewives, young adults, and retired persons. Some males in their 40s and 50s are also interested in volunteer teaching. Although these males are generally busy in their daily work, they squeeze time out of their tight schedule to join the teaching staff and, thereby, to broaden their cultural sight. Housewives and young adults in both sexes also derive benefit from volunteer teaching. Very often they say, "I'm very happy to have many friends with different cultures." They also say, "I feel excited to be helpful to the foreigners in my community." Some volunteers even choose to learn the mother tongues of the learners, such as Korean, Chinese, Philippine dialects and Portuguese.

The topics frequently discussed in the seminar include the following:

Which should be our priority, helping the learners or teaching them?
What is the difference between teaching Japanese as a second language to these groups of learners and teaching it as the first language to ordinary school children?
How to manage classes in which Japanese nationals cooperate with non-nationals?
How to link Japanese language classes with other minority-supportive activities in order, for instance, to improve public understanding of foreigners' social status?
Why are Japanese not open-minded to foreigners?
How do neighbouring countries deal with minority issues?

Why did European and North American countries change their minority policies? And what should be the roles of central and local governments regarding minority issues?

Many volunteer teachers acknowledge their being "ignorant" about their own society and culture. Practical experiences at the city-organized classes motivate them to reflect upon and learn about their own community. In order to facilitate their sharing experience as volunteer teachers, the Kawasaki Board of Education organized a special seminar, where three thematic groups looked into the real classroom situation, improvement of teaching performance in Japanese language classes, and daily-life supporting activities. Some of the volunteer teachers joined the information-sharing programmes organized by the municipal governments of Tokyo and Yokohama.

In short, the programmes are helpful not only to "minority" learners but also to "majority" teachers in enriching their life. In addition, they are meaningful in building public opinion in favour of creating a multiethnic and multicultural community as an alternative to the assimilative past in Kawasaki and in Japan. Some learners in Japanese language classes made presentations about their experience before the Japanese audience in study programmes on peace, violence, equality and social conflicts. Very often their presentations so impressed the audience that some of the latter resolved to join voluntary activities for entending medical care and full citizenship to foreign residents.

Supported by such activities and by the subsequently emerging favourable public opinion, the city government decided for the fist time in Japan to establish a "Local Assembly of Non-Japanese Residents" as an organization for campaigning for the full citizenship of non-Japanese residents. It also decided in May 1996, firstly in Japan, to employ non-Japanese individuals as municipal officers and specialists in spite of strong objection from the central government.

After ten years of experiment, the Kawasaki guidelines for educating foreigners are now under review for further improvement. New guidelines are expected to address adult education issues and minority rights to education in Japanese language, mother tongue, and cultural development and exchange.

The Kawasaki case is one of the leading experimental activities in Japan's adult education. In cooperation with Kansai and Yamagata, Kawasaki is seeking a nationwide adult education network for multiethnic communities covering approximately 3,300 local governments. The 1995 conference of the Japanese Society for Social Education was attended by some 800 to 1,000 grassroots activists, specialists at community education centres, and university teachers. The participants formed a standing thematic discussion group for "Migrants' Life and Learning."

Local activities and networks now exercise significant influence even upon the central government. In 1991, the Ministry of Education created a Section for International Education and

started, through the Section, to fund public school's Japanese language programmes for migrant children. In 1994, the Department of Culture (DC) launched a project entitled "Promotion of Japanese Language Learning in Local Communities." As part of this project, the DC designated four regions, including Kawasaki, as model regions, whereby to spread useful experiences among various local communities.

In 1995, the DC organized a symposium, at which an important issue was brought up as regards what should be Japan's desirable language policy for the 21st century The panel posed a question of whether Japan should continue to be a monolingual society or should it be changed to a multilingual society. Considering Japan's century-old history of assimilation policies, this event seems to signal an imminent epoch-making change from monoculturalism to multiculturalism or cultural diversity. In March 1997, a report will be published of the DC project in Kawasaki recognizing, with the authority of the DC, non-Japanese residents' rights to learning and participation in the mainstream Japanese life.[1]

3. Overcoming the *Chunghua* Thought and Reassessing the Laoze-Changze Thought

The task that we now face is to step into a new community beyond the nation state and to overcome the conventional idea of "monoethinc" society. We are trying to create a new community in which persons of different ethnic backgrounds sustain self-esteem as individuals, enjoy their own life equally as others, and cooperate with others. We can consider three possible types of "residents" for the new community: 1) residents with Japanese nationality, 2) residents without Japanese nationality but with citizenship in the Japanese state, and 3) residents with neither Japanese nationality nor citizenship.

The context of this consideration is that multinational enterprises have become a major factor in the world economy. We have to admit the inevitableness of going beyond the national border not only economically but also culturally. We cannot go back to the time of a narrowly-defined "national" life. Transition from the nation state to a multiethnic/multicultural social life is unavoidable. Therefore, should we hang on to the outdated idea of *monoethinc* state, we might confront serious cultural conflicts in a new future. Our 21st century might thus become troublesome.

The transition requires adult education to change as well. Learning programmes should be made available to those who crisscross national borders. As well, learning programmes should also be provided to the residents with Japanese nationality in order to transform them to members of the newly emerging multiethnic/multicultural community. All residents in Japan should thus

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[1] I chaired the working committee of specialists for the project until I resigned in March 1996 to come to Honk Kong to conduct research about the situation of ethnic languages and cultures there.

become citizens of an Asian community, of an Asia-Pacific community, and of a global community. The old, narrowly-defined Yamato nation as a concept must now be jettisoned.

Nevertheless, we have to admit that the conventional Yamato-centred way of thinking is still influential in Japan, and, therefore, that our trial is just at the beginning stage. At the same time, it is also to be admitted that the transition has already applied some significant impact upon some parts of the central government, which now consider policies for the new age.

Let us expand our vision to the larger, East Asian world. In my understanding, the kind of adult education programmes which Kawasaki experimented has also been tested in the neighbouring "Small Dragons." South Korea embraces about 100,000 migrant workers such as Chinese-Korean, Philippine, Pakistani and Nepali workers. Christian organizations and others run Korean language classes and consulting agencies on such matters as labour, health and law. In Taiwan, there are about 200,000 migrant workers from the Philippines, Thailand and Malaysia. In Hong Kong, there are about 200,000 or 250,000 "legally-imported workers" and more than 50,000 unregistered workers. Cantonese language classes are in operation for immigrants from China, Thailand, Indonesia and other regions. And the Asian Migrant Centre of Hong Kong is promoting information exchange among Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and the Philippines.

There is, nevertheless, a common obstacle, that is, the absence of open-mindedness among Northeast Asian peoples. Northeast Asians are, generally, not as tolerant, for instance, as Australians and New Zealanders. Where does this obstacle stem from?

According to the findings from my field work, Northeast Asians are proud of their own culture. So much so that they often look down upon individuals from less developed countries. One reason for this originates from the "national education" which Japanese colonialists superimposed on them. There are other reasons as well, the region's premodern history in particular. Northeast Asia used to house an extremely powerful empire. It did so for over 3,000 years. From this, Northeast Asians developed reverence for China--*chungkuo* or the Middle Kingdom--and arrogance over countries remote from China. Both the *chunghua* thought and Yamato-centralism as its opposite can be explained against such an historical background.

One of the main ingredients of the *chunghua* thought was Confucianism. Traditionally, this tought was the ruling ideology of China, Korea and Japan. In the processes of modernization and national building, as well, school textbooks promulgated and perpetuated elements of this ideology. True, Confucianism also played a positive role, for instance, of promoting a sense of social order, a hard-working spirit, and East Asians' pride about their own culture. But one cannot deny the abuse of this ideology by the political leaders who indoctrinated nationalism or blind loyalty to the state.

Confucius did not pay attention to the relationship between nature and human beings. Instead, he gave a tremendous emphasis to human society modeling after the feudal arrangement

of the Chow Dynasty. The person whom Confucius idealized was "the Great Man" or the gentleman who was allegiant to his master while maintaining good relationships with equals and inferiors. This gentleman required good cultural skills including literacy, ability to play music instruments, and the power of self-control. Confucius, accordingly, aproved of the values of such "cultural" domains as language, character, music, courtesy, and stately manners--the domains in which most advanced was the Imperial China. He thus prepared the long-entrenched arrogance of Northeast Asians over the peoples of non-Chinese cultures, cultural chauvinism, and pride of their blood and nationality.

In order to justly assess the historical role of Confucianism, it is necessary to re-evaluate its counterpart, the thought of Laoze and Changze, which has also influenced the East Asian mind for more than 2,500 years. The Laoze-Changze thought focused on human beings as part of nature. In this thought, no difference existed between human beings and other creatures such as animals, birds, insects, grass and trees; both pertained to nature. Everything that existed was in the process of natural circulation involving birth and death. Most important in dealing with such natural things was to let them perform their individual roles as fully as nature dictated. Laoze and Changze stated that communication with nature was essential for the full performance of such roles. While enjoying artificial music, therefore, it should be noted that artificial music too is a reflection of natural sounds such as winds and waves.

From this viewpoint, it was not desirable to pursue reputation and status at the expense of the nature of life. Laoze and Changze, therefore, criticized the expansion of the secular kingdom with weaponry. In this thought, it is meaningless and rather silly to divide human beings by nationality, culture or "blood" and discriminate against persons of different nationalities, and so on.

Undoubtedly, the Laoze-Changze thought does not help solve all of our current problems. "Nation states" are still conducting economic competitions. Such competitions become increasingly serious as relationships become increasingly complicated between multinational enterprises and their home governments. Multinational enterprises have been supported by their home government in many ways such as subsidies for developing new technology. In return, they have been contributing to their home government some of their profit earned from overseas operations. Then, governments fight against each other for the benefit of the multinational enterprises originating from their own country. Examples of such multinational enterprises are America's General Motors, Japan's Toyota, and South Korea's Hyundai. Naturally, such "patriotic" propaganda campaigns as the "workforce literacy" movement gain popular support among nation states. And multicultural education is brushed aside for being "costly" and "unproductive." It is here not difficult to see the age-old ideology of Confucianism coming into play or ascending over the Laoze-Changze thought.

But there is some hope as well. We have to note that environmental pollution and death from overworking in the modern industrial Northeast Asia are exacerbated by Confucianism, for the latter teaches to work hard for profit and artificial comfort. These teachings are the reasons

for the prosperity of many Northeast Asian multinational enterprises, as well as for the generallization of "problems." The hope comes from the very fact that Northeast Asian businesses have expanded the range of their activity to the multinational dimension. As their business activities expanded, so did various non-business connections. Consequently, various non-business networks emerged across national borders for such purposes as protecting the environment and ecosystems. Multinational enterprises also created opportunities of direct contact and the sharing of information, life standards, and human and natural feelings among diverse peoples who used to be divided by national borders. Such new developments prepare important channels through which to address problems common to different peoples, especially the problems created by the globalization of the profit-seeking work ethic. At this juncture, we can rediscover the significant bearings of the Laoze-Changze thought upon our contemporary life and adult education in the post-modern, post-industrial Northeast Asia.

In Japan, we have been employing Euro-American educational theories since the 1870s, that is to say, for more than a century. The theories have been useful in suggesting what problems we face. As well, we have studied the educational systems of Great Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States. We have tried to discover both differences from and similarities to the Japanese system. And honestly, these efforts have been fruitful. Since Euro-American theories and systems of education evolved from the concrete contexts of Euro-American societies, however, many of them have turned out not to be applicable to the historical, cultural and geographical contexts of Japan, a society which was East Asian by origin. On the other hand, we have to admit our negligence of the educational theories and practices of our neighbours in Korea and China. We believed that the neighbours were "less developed." In doing so, we lost a sense of what was unique to East Asian education. This is to say, we lost the East Asian context of our own educational arrangements. Very often, thus, we mistook what was unique to East Asians to be exclusively Japanese, and what was unique to Euro-Americans to be exclusively Japanese. The result was isolation and frustration.

Time has arrived for us to develop equal relationships with our neighbours, and share experiences and cooperate in building a desirable future. Regional organizations such as the ASPBAE and the EAFAE (East Asian Forum for Adult Education) supply valuable opportunities for exploring the East Asian context and developing a feasible mode of adult education for East Asia's 21st century.